

Meet Marshall Washick, CQI Manager for DC Fire and Individual NEMSQA Member

Marshall Washick, MS, NRP, has worked in EMS since the early 2000s, serving as both a street medic and a quality assurance peer reviewer. He also spent 2 years with the Peace Corps in Botswana, serving as a Clinic and Health Team Volunteer on a mission addressing the impact of HIV/AIDS.

Marshall reflected on his Peace Corps service, saying, “I found it to be so beneficial to my EMS career. When I came back to the US, I had a much better appreciation for what EMTs and paramedics do, and also how to change things and make them better.”



If you could change one thing about EMS, what would it be?

Paramedics need to start stepping up into more clinical leadership roles. A lot of our research and science is physician-driven. Historically, that was necessary—you didn’t have a ton of EMTs and paramedics out there with advanced degrees or experience conducting research and asking questions. But we are now seeing more EMTs and paramedics with advanced degrees, and I think that it’s time for those folks to start leading the research and setting the agenda. The people that do the work are generally the people that have the solution.

How do you think we go about more getting EMTs and paramedics involved in research?

Some of it is that the positions don’t even exist yet. The industry is evolving and we’ll eventually get there. It’s an inevitability. There has to be a critical mass at some point of EMTs and paramedics with advanced degrees that say, collectively, “Alright, there’s enough of us now, here’s the agenda.” And I think that to get there is just going to take time.

What is your “passion project” right now?

One of the things that I’ve started getting into is learning more about the history of EMS, to understand how we got to this point. I’m going through and trying to read all of the Jack Stout articles that he wrote in JEMS in the 80s and 90s. And there’s a book that I’ve been just ravaging through called *Paramedics On and Off the Street*. It’s an ethnography written by an anthropologist who spent time riding with Calgary EMS up in Canada. What’s fascinating about this book is you have a person whose whole career is studying people qualitatively, who then puts this narrative and story together in a way that connects it to a theory that gives us some context and explanation. Fascinating stuff.

Why did you decide to become a NEMSQA member?

I’m very passionate and have a lot of ideas about EMS, and in order to effect change you have to actually show up and be at the table. This is the perfect forum for me to voice my opinion and have valuable input on a topic that I’m passionate about and that I think is important. There is just so much untapped potential in the prehospital industry. There’s so much to learn, so much to do, so much to try, and I want to do what I can for EMS.

What is your dream job?

Probably a professional fly-fishing guide. I enjoy how technical fly-fishing is, and it gives me the opportunity to stand in a river and be out in nature all day. It’s great.

What’s your favorite pizza topping?

Pineapple, jalapeño, and ham.